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SUBJECT: EU TROIKA DISCOURAGED ABOUT SOMALI RECONCILIATION  
AFTER VISITING HORN

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Laurence Wohlers for Reason  
s 1.4 b and d.

1.(C) Summary: A working-level EU fact-finding mission returned from the Horn of Africa over the weekend discouraged about current fighting in Mogadishu and prospects for Somali reconciliation. Somali President Yusuf told the mission in a phone conversation that he will not ask Ethiopian troops to refrain from engaging Somali government opponents he described as "terrorists." Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles told the group that his country's troops are doing the right thing in Somalia and will continue "with backing from the US." Mission sources expressed concern, however, that the Ethiopian actions were too heavy handed and simply encouraging the anti-TFG clans to unite with extremists. Although the EU supports an immediate cease-fire, it is not optimistic about current prospects for government reconciliation in Somalia. Nonetheless, the EU's pledge of 15 million euros has been approved and a contract for disbursement is expected to signed this week. End summary.

2.(C) Poloff spoke April 2 to two members of the troika fact-finding mission, Michele Cervone D'Urso, Somalia desk officer at the European Commission, and Jesper Tvedad, Somalia desk officer at the Council Secretariat (the other two mission members were representatives of German and upcoming Portuguese EU presidencies). Both said the original purpose of the trip, which was to encourage other countries in the Horn of Africa to support actively the process of government reconciliation in Somalia, was overtaken by events on the ground in Mogadishu, which saw heavy fighting between Ethiopian forces and Hawiyen clan members during the past week. Security concerns prevented the group from traveling to Mogadishu. Although the German presidency representative spoke by phone to President Yusuf on March 31, he received little encouragement that Yusuf would act decisively to curb the violence, Cervone D'Urso said. Yusuf took a hands-off the fighting, saying the were terrorists, a Are you asking me to `a?" Yusuf put a positive Reconciliation Conference, now scheduled for May, is beginning to look more and more like window dressing for external consumption instead of a forum for real political debate and change. Neither Cervone D'Urso nor Tvedad saw any sign that Ugandan peacekeepers in Mogadishu will be joined by peacekeepers from other countries any time soon since there is a lack of donor funding as well as a lack of troop-contributing countries.

5.(C) Despite the challenges, the EU is moving forward with disbursement of its pledged 15 million euros to the African Union, which will be used in part to pay per diem costs to

the Ugandan troops, but also to fund government institution-building in Mogadishu. The Political and Security Committee and the European Development Fund have approved the 15 million euro contribution and the EU expects to sign the contract this week, Cervone D'Urso said.

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